

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECOSOC
SUBJECT: 1978 SUMMER ECOSOC - AGENDA ITEM 28:
DECOLONIZATION; SUB-ITEM: ASSISTANCE TO PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE

REF: GENEVA 10879

1. WE HAD A FURTHER INFORMAL BACK-AND-FORTH ON THE LANGUAGE OF A DRAFT DECISION ON THIS SUBJECT, WITH THIRD COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MWANGAGUHUNGA ACTING AS GO-BETWEEN. THE ARABS REJECTED OUR REDRAFT (REFTEL) AND CAME BACK WITH A CHANGED VERSION OF OUR DRAFT, TILTED AGAIN IN FAVOR OF THEIR POSITION, AND WE REPLIED WITH YET ANOTHER VERSION THAT ACCOMMODATED A COUPLE OF THEIR CHANGES BUT RESTORED THE BALANCE. THE ARABS WOULD NOT ACCEPT THIS VERSION EITHER, AND AT THAT JUNCTURE GAVE UP THE STRUGGLE AND AGREED TO A SIMPLE PROPOSAL TO BE MADE FROM THE CHAIR THAT ECOSOC NOTE THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON THE QUESTION, WITH NO EXPLANATIONS OR RESERVATIONS TO BE MADE FROM THE FLOOR. WE AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES, AS WELL
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AS THE ISRAELI OBSERVER WITH WHOM WE KEPT IN CLOSE CONTACT, READILY AGREED.

2. THIS SCENARIO WAS PLAYED OUT IN THIRD COMMITTEE ON JULY 19, WITH THE CHAIRMAN SIMPLY SUGGESTING THAT, SINCE NO PROPOSALS HAD BEEN SUBMITTED, THE SYG'S REPORT (E/1978/55 AND ADDS. 1 TO 3) BE NOTED. THERE WAS NO OBJECTION OR

COMMENT. WHEN THE ACT WAS REPEATED ON JULY 21 IN PLENARY, HOWEVER, THE ARAB COUNTRIES (IRAQ, SYRIA, UAE, EGYPTIAN OBSERVER, LIBYAN OBSERVER, MAURITANIA, ALGERIA, SOMALIA) PLUS CUBA FOLLOWED IT WITH BRIEF STATEMENTS EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT WITH UN AGENCIES THAT HAD NOT COMPLIED WITH ECOSOC RESOLUTION 2100 AND CALLING ON THEM TO DO SO AND TO REPORT TO ECOSOC; SYRIA ADDED THAT A BIG POWER WAS THREATENING UN AGENCIES WITH A DENIAL OF FUNDS IF THEY DID COMPLY.

3. WE DO NOT HAVE A COMPLETELY SATISFACTORY ANALYSIS OF WHY THE ARABS GAVE UP ON THIS, AND THE ISRAELIS AND OTHERS ARE EQUALLY PUZZLED. HOWEVER, IT MAY HAVE BEEN A COMBINATION OF THE FOLLOWING: (A) IT BECAME CLEAR THE US WOULD STAND FIRM AND THAT WE HAD THE SUPPORT OF OTHERS; (B) THE ARABS WERE SPLIT AMONG THEMSELVES, I.E., HARDLINERS LED BY IRAQ AND SYRIA AND MODERATES LED BY THE EGYPTIAN OBSERVER WHO HEADS THE ARAB GROUP; (C) THEY WERE SENSITIVE TO THEIR RECENT DEFEAT IN ILO AND RETREAT IN UNDP (D) THEY MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY THE REFUSAL OF G-77 CHAIRMAN CHARRY-SAMPER (COLOMBIA) TO INTRODUCE A RESOLUTION IN THE NAME OF THE G-77, AND THE REALIZATION THAT OTHER LATIN AMERICANS ALSO HAD PROBLEMS (WE CONSULTED THEM IN OUR COUNTER-DRAFT AND INCORPORATED A COUPLE OF THEIR IDEAS); (E) COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MWANGAGUHUNGA WAS GENERALLY HELPFUL TO US.(HE WAS IN TURN GRATEFUL TO US LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND DELIGHTED WITH THE OUTCOME, ALTHOUGH ANNOYED WITH THE ARABS FOR BREAKING THE AGREEMENT ON SILENCE WHEN THE MATTER WENT TO PLENARY.) VANDEN HEUVEL

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